

NEWS

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USDA ISSUES FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30, 1997 -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman today delivered the U.S. Department of Agriculture's five-year strategic plan to Congress as required by the Government Performance and Results Act or "the Results Act."

"This plan reflects the goals and vision for USDA which I have been supporting and encouraging during my tenure here," Glickman said. "USDA is composed of many different agencies with different missions, but which work together for common goals, each contributing to the mosaic in its own unique way."

The strategic goals identified in the plan for USDA policies and programs are to:

- Expand economic and trade opportunities for agricultural producers and other rural residents;
- Ensure food for the hungry, and a safe, affordable, nutritious, and accessible food supply;
- Promote sensible management of our natural resources.

"When President Lincoln founded the Department of Agriculture in 1862, he called it the 'People's Department,' since in Lincoln's day 90 percent of the people were farmers who needed good seed and good information to grow their crops," Glickman said. "Today, though the scope of its responsibilities has expanded significantly, USDA continues Lincoln's legacy by serving all Americans--the two percent of our Nation who farm and the 20 percent who live in rural America, as well as families needing nutritional services, visitors to our National Forests, the half of all American school children who eat school lunches provided through the National School Lunch Program, and everyone who needs to eat safe food."

The Results Act requires all federal agencies to provide (1) a long-term strategic plan; (2) an annual performance plan linked to the strategic plan that accompanies the budget requests of agencies to Congress; and (3) following fiscal year 1999, an annual report to Congress on accomplishment of performance plan goals.

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"Our plan enables us to articulate the cross-cutting activities and opportunities among USDA agencies and with our public and private sector partners," Acting Chief Financial Officer Irwin T. David said. "It is structured to concentrate USDA's limited resources on doing what the public expects of us, to minimize overlap and duplication of efforts, and to produce tangible outcomes. With this plan we are embarking on a new way of doing business."

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